

- Tracks and publishes quarterly health care indicators to identify emerging health sector trends, including data on health care utilization and costs; health sector employment, wages, and prices; and economy-wide economic conditions.

- Prepares estimates of NHE for future years by type of service and source of financing.

- Develops, analyzes and publishes results from health sector models which allow evaluation of the impact of proposed changes to the current health system on the overall economy.

- Develops, maintains, and updates provider market basket input price indexes, including the Hospital Input Price Index, the Medicare Economic Index, and the other price indexes mandated for use in setting Medicare payments to providers.

- Provides technical support for HCFA regulatory processes, especially those related to payment systems or reform.

Dated: February 8, 1998.

Nancy-Ann Min DeParle,

Administrator, Health Care Financing Administration.

[FR Doc. 98-5874 Filed 3-6-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4120-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Information Collection Submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Approval Under the Paperwork Reduction Act

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The information collection requirements to evaluate visitor response to the recreation fee demonstration program in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wildlife Refuges has been submitted to OMB for approval under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before April 8, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Comments and suggestions on specific requirements should be sent directly to the Office of Management and Budget, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Attention: Department of the Interior Desk Officer, 725-17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20503; and a copy to the Service's Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, [MS 222 ARLSQ], 1849 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20240.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stephens R. Vehrs, Refuge Specialist, Division of Refuges, 703/358-2397; or Phadrea Ponds, Wildlife Biologist, U.S. Geological Survey, Fort Collins, CO, 970/226-9445.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Service submitted the following proposed information collection clearance requirement to OMB for review and approval under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13. Comments are invited on (1) whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (3) ways to enhance quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and, (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Congress authorized a recreation fee demonstration program in Public Law 104-134. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was one of the four agencies mandated to implement the program and evaluate its impact on the visiting public. This study is designed to scientifically evaluate visitor reactions impact of the fees on visitation to the national wildlife refuges (NWR); it will be conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey, Biological Resources Division, Social Economic and Institutional Analysis Section in Fort Collins, Colorado under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

To represent the various types of fee changes, as well as fee demonstration refuges, six distinct fee programs and ten refuges were selected for inclusion in the study. These include (1) new entrance fees (Sacramento NWR, CA and Aransas NWR, TX); (2) increased entrance fees (Dungeness NWR, WA); (3) new annual passes (Chincoteague NWR, VA and Crab Orchard NWR, IL); (4) new hunt fees (St. Catherine's Creek NWR, MS and Balcones NWR, TX); (5) non-hunt use permits (Buenos Aires NWR, AZ and Fort Niobrara NWR, NE), and (6) non-fee adjustments (Piedmont NWR, GA). Random samples of individuals using these refuges will be surveyed.

The Service plans to use as part of the evaluation process a survey questionnaire to assess the different fee

programs. An on-site questionnaire will be distributed during the peak season to a random sample of the visiting public. A minimum of 400 completed surveys will be obtained for each fee type. An additional 200 surveys will be obtained from Sacramento NWR to allow for generation of a statistic on credit card entrances. Overall, this will result in a total sample of 2,600 respondents. The margin of error for each fee type is $\pm 5\%$ at the 95% confidence level. The information gained from this survey will provide a scientific basis for evaluating the viability of the fee program among the visiting public. The lead project officer is Dr. Jonathan G. Taylor, Research Social Scientist, phone 970-226-9438, 4512 McMurry Avenue, Fort Collins, CO 80525-3400.

Title: Evaluation of visitor responses to recreation fee demonstration program.

Bureau form number: None.

Frequency of collection: Annual.

Description of respondents: Individuals and households.

Number of respondents: 2,600.

Estimated completion time: 10 minutes.

Burden estimate: 433 hours.

Paul R. Schmidt,

Acting Assistant Director for Refuges and Wildlife.

[FR Doc. 98-5999 Filed 3-6-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Environmental Statements; Availability, etc. Lafayette Park Northside Barrier Project

ACTION: Announcement: Availability of environmental assessment for the Lafayette Park Northside Barrier project.

SUMMARY: The National Park Service, at the request of the Department of Treasury, has prepared an Environmental Assessment for a construction project to replace temporary security barriers along the north side of Lafayette Park across from the White House with permanent security barriers. The project also includes the future removal by the National Park Service of a lodge house located in Lafayette Park. The document is available for review and public comment through April 15, 1998.

Copies may be requested by calling the National Park Service, White House Liaison, at (202) 619-6344 weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Written requests may be sent to 1100 Ohio